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ABSTRACT

The paper offers the classroom practitioner the parameters for effective program development for the severely and profoundly handicapped. Focused on are the identification of annual goals for remediation, underscoring "reasonableness" in order that the child, parent, and teacher not become frustrated and, in turn, disenchanted. Also addressed is the issue of specifying the component behaviors of the annual goal. Finally, the establishment of criterion for successful completion of each annual goal as well as techniques for trouble shooting programatic difficulties are considered. (Author/SBH)

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ABSTRACT

Developing Annual Goals and Intermediate Behavioral Objectives for Individualized Education Programs for the Severely and Profoundly Handicapped

David L. Holmes

Once learning assessments are complete the teacher is faced with developing remedial programs for the children in his or her care. The major problems for the teacher is where do I begin? How do I interpret the results of a learning assessment into a remedial plan?

It was the purpose of this paper to address just these issues, i.e., to offer the classroom practitioner the parameters for effective program development.

The scope of this paper encompassed first the identification of annual goals for remediation, underscoring "reasonableness" in order that child, parent, and teacher not become frustrated and, in turn, disenchanted.

Secondly, the paper addressed the issue of specifying the component behaviors of the annual goal, i.e., what discrete objectives must be attained in order to assure realization of the annual goals. Finally, the paper addressed the establishment of criterion for successful completion of each annual goal as well as techniques for trouble shooting programmatic difficulties.

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Developing Annual Goals and Intermediate Behavioral Objectives for Individualized Education Programs for the Severely and Profoundly Handicapped

By David L. Holmes

With the passage of P.L. 94-142 educators and psychologists across the country are faced with the dilemma of writing behavioral objectives and being held accountable for the implementation of individualized education programs designed to meet these objectives.

For many, in the past, behavioral objectives were generally thought to be "busy work" for teachers, exercises reserved for teacher preparation courses. In regular education, behavioral objectives may not seem to be as important for focusing instructional practices as is necessary for the severely and profoundly handicapped. Although I feel that clear, concise, procedurally defined objectives are necessary for all levels of educational practices, for the severely and profoundly handicapped they are absolutely necessary. This group of children have such a wide range of educational needs that should one not have a clear direction to take chaos in the classroom would most definitely ensue.

At the outset let us state that when you are developing annual goals for children you must always keep "reasonableness" in mind, i.e., if you attempt to deal, initially, with a child's total learning deficiencies you will end up accomplishing very little. Only objectives that stand a chance of being successful should be identified.

Further, objectives that stand a chance of successfully being met can only be determined by a thorough assessment of the child's behavioral repertoire. Once the assessment and analysis of the child's behavioral development has taken place you can then define your goal just a few developmental steps beyond. For example, for a youngster who is hyperimpulsive your initial goal would not be "maintains self-control when faced with failure, problems or disappointments" (SEMS, 1973) but rather "sits quietly for 30 seconds to one minute when in a group" if his present level of self-control is nonexistent.

Realistic reasonable goals need not put a ceiling on the child, i.e., you are not saying that the child will never gain full "self-control", rather reasonable goals are those which can be attained over the school year.

Dooming a child to constant failure by making unreasonable goals is not only contrary to the basic premises of special education but also will result in disenchanted teachers and parents. Remember, severely and profoundly handicapped children usually offer little reinforcement to parents and teachers. In order for the child to be able to give parents and teachers "progress" rewards reasonable goals must be established.

Now that we have made a case for reasonable goals let us move on to "how to" develop behavioral objectives for the children. As

stated earlier, reasonable goals can only be selected following a thorough behavioral assessment. This assessment should include a battery of psychological and educational tests and Criterion Referenced Materials (Holmes, 1975). Complete social and medical history reports should also be developed and refered to when establishing your goals for the child. The reason for this is that there are obvious limitations to prescribing goals based solely upon the reportings of psychologists and learning consultants. The limitations focus on the ability of the family of the child to follow through on them as well as on the medically based constraints placed upon the child. For example, if you establish a goal of communicating in three word phrases for a child who has a series hearing disability and who comes from a Spanish speaking family your chances of realizing that goal are greatly compromised.

Moving on then, for purposes of this paper, we are assuming that all of these variables have been accounted for and that you have test protocols which are complete and sensitive to the severity of the child's handicapping condition.

You are now faced with the question "Okay, now where do I begin?" I like to organize the child's learning experiences into eight categories. Those categories are:

NOTE: For the most part these categories take for granted that the child does not have any serious auditory, visual or orthopedic handicaps. If a child does have problems in these areas, use the global category and revamp to meet his or her needs. For

example, instead of "eye-contact" for a blind child, stress head and face positional compliance. For an orthopedically handicapped child before you can get good sitting behavior you may have to develop a bipedal, quadrapedal (static and dynamic) postural program, etc.

1. Learning Readiness

   The ability to attend and comply (the basics for any learning to ensue).

2. Motor Imitation

   You cannot teach the child everything he or she needs to know, therefore, you must train motor imitation so that independent learning can take place. Remember, most severely and profoundly handicapped children could care less about imitating appropriate behavior as they are so engrossed in their own self-satisfaction.

3. Socio-Recreational

   The social skill development of the child including self-care, isolated play, interactional play and other general adaptive behavior.

4. Speech

   The ability to communicate basic wants and needs without the elaborate symbolism necessary for language. Articulation is stressed here except for children who are mute, due to physiological reasons, then manual communication is stressed.

5. Academic Readiness

   Basic perceptual motor activities which are precursors to success in academic activities, i.e., matching, sorting, labelling, etc.

6. Language

   The use of speech in a generalized, functional manner. Language training moves from stereotyped responses to more fluidity of response.

7. Academic Skills

   Reading, arithmetic, speelling, and penmanship. The basic academic skills necessary for progressing towards grade normal behavior.

8. Pre-Vocational Skills

   Survival and production in society is stressed in this area, e.g., survival academics, domestic skills, independent self-care, and vocational skills.

If it is from these eight categories that you can begin to map out the child's educational experiences for the year and you will also gain a better view of where the child is in the total scheme of things.

For a clearer picture of prioritizing goals, see the program goals flow chart attached.

Intermediate Objectives

Once you have identified your annual goals for the child then you must "operationalize" (McNeil, 1970) these goals in order that you be more precise as yo what you want for the child and from the child. As stated earlier, it is common practice in education to view behavioral objectives as busy work, of little value in the real world of teaching. This attitude is contrary to the results of research in the area of teacher effectiveness and pupil progress. For example, McNeil (1967) Moffett (1966) and Smithman (1970) as well as others have studied the effects of instructional objectives and found, unanimously, that children showed more gains in scholastic skills when their teachers worked from behavioral objectives which included criteria for accomplishing these objectives. I too believe that children learn faster and receive a more focused, quality education when behavioral objectives are employed by teachers. As such, I will take you through the steps necessary to procedurally develop intermediate objectives for the child's annual goals. There must be two "givens" before we can start to develop intermediate objectives. The first is that the child has been adequately assessed in regards to his or her level of functioning. Second, you have identified, from the eight categories (or more) reasonable annual goals for the child. The next step is to do some task analysis.

Task analysis is the precursor to any well stated intermediate objective. Task analysis is very simply, the analysis of the task (annual goal in this case). The difficult part is making certain that you have analyzed the task so completely that you have not left out any component. I have found Santa Cruz Special Education Management System (SEMS) to be an excellent guide when analyzing different skill areas. In SEMS there is a Behavioral Characteristics Progression (BCP) chart which separates a child's learning experiences into 59 possible strands, e.g., from toileting and dressing to math and reading and also sign language and wheel chair use to name a few. There are others too. For example, Steps to Independence: A Skills Training Guide bu Baker, et al (1976). A thorough guide to developing self-help skills from beginning to advanced including aguide on behavior problems. This series has a complete performance inventory which does task analysis on the major self-help skill areas.

Guide to Early Developmental Training from the Wabash Center (1977). This guide covers self-help through academic readiness. Not only does it do task analysis on these skill areas it also gives you behavioral objectives coupled with teaching strategies.

Lesson Plans for Enhancing PreSchool Developmental Progress by Quick and Campbell (1976) is a series of lesson plans which include behavioral objectives and teaching strategies for self-help skill development through academic readiness. This guide is not as complete as the others but it could serve as a reference in a task analysis operation.

The above guides are just a few of the developmentally organized references for task analysis. When you begin your work of designing intermediate objectives for children these guides will prove to be invaluable. One final note, the guides will not always be as sensitive to the needs of a particular child as we would like, therefore, be prepared to analyze a task further until you feel that steps are small enough. Sometimes it helps to act out a behavior in order that you get a time perspective of the component steps.

Now that you have some references to turn to let us proceed to the final step, that is, the specific attributes of a good, operationally defined intermediate objective. Wheeler and Fox (1972) have done a creditable job of delineating the components of a behavioral objective as follows: conditions, behavior and criteria. "Conditions" means "the conditions under which the behavior is to occur." "Behavior" is a description of expected terminal behavior which can be observed

and measured. "Criteria" means level of acceptable performance. An example would be:

Conditions	Behavior	Criteria
While in school	Johnny will not hit, bite, scratch, kick, throw objects, or be involved in any other harmful act.	30 consecutive days without harmful behaviors

As you can see this intermediate objective does not use general, vague terms but rather very specific terms in order that there be no confusion on the part of the teacher, supervisor, and Johnny. For Johnny, it was determined that he needed to control his behavior first in school and once "criteria" is reached in school then the next "condition" might be "on the playground" then "on the bus" and eventually "in the home."

For some children the conditions must be very stringent. For example, you might want to describe the response time, e.e., within 15 seconds of the cue "Come". The reason for specifying response time is that for some children response delay is part of their learning handicap.

Let us take another example but begin from the point of post assessment. You have in your hands the protocols of Johnny. From these protocols you have established four categories in

in which you feel should lie his annual goals. They are Learning Readiness, Motor Imitation, Social-Recreational and Speech. You might want to develop a form to identify each annual goal and along side each annual goal you might want to list two intermediate objectives in sequential order (see attached Annual Goal Outline).

By delineating intermediate objectives in a "First, work on", "Second, work on" manner it gives the teacher the direction to take once criteria is met on an earlier objective. The form gives you a quick reference to where Johnny is going, educationally, for the year and will make it easier for you to spot check progress as the year progresses It must be remembered the annual goals and intermediate objectives you have developed are not sacred by any stretch of the imagination. They must be held to constant scrutiny and changed if necessary. Remember too, that it is easy to change objectives before analyzing what is going wrong. Therefore, determine first if there are any incorrect teaching practices taking place before you decide to alter a child's goals and objectives.

Annual Goal Outline

Name: John Smith
Age: 11 years, 5 months
School System: Rockaway Township
School Year: 1981-1982
Date of Report: August 7, 1981

A. Learning Readiness

1. First, work on: Quiet Sitting. Within two seconds of the cue, "Sit Quiet", Johnny will sit with hands, feet, and torso not moving for ten seconds 90% of the time for three consecutive days.

2. Second, work on: Eye-contact. While in the classroom and within two seconds of the cue, "Look at me", Johnny will make eye-contact with the teacher for three seconds 90% of the time for three consecutive days.

B. Motor Imitation

1. First, work on: Gross Motor Imitation. While in the classroom and within one second of the cue, "Do this", Johnny will imitate: stand up, sit down, touch toes, touch head, and other gross motor imitations for 90% correct responding over three consecutive days.

2. Second, work on: Fine Motor. While in the classroom and within one second of the cue "Do this", Johnny will imitate: Touching nose, ears, eyes, fingers, and other three consecutive days.

C. Social-Recreation

1. First work on: Toilet Training. While at school Johnny will use the toilet appropriately without accident for 30 consecutive days.

2. Second, work on: Dressing. within one minute of the cue "Get dressed", Johnny will put his pants on and snap and zipper for 90% correct responding over three consecutive days.

D. Verbal Imitation

1. First, work on: Imitative Phonemes. While in the speech room and classroom and with the cue "Say ___", Johnny will imitate a, buh, cuh, and other phonemes in his repertoire for 90% correct responding over three consecutive days.

2. Second, work on: Language. Imitative phonemes (phonetic alphabet). While in the speech room and the classroom and within one second of the cue "Say _____", Johnny will imitate all phonemes in the phonetic alphabet for 80% correct responding over three consecutive days.

E. Functional Speech

1. First, work on:

2. Second, work on:

F. Academics (Readiness)

1. First, work on:

2. Second, work on:

G. Academics (Writing)

1. First, work on:

2. Second, work on:

H. Academics (Arithmetic)

1. First, work on:

2. Second, work on:

I. Academics (Reading)

1. First, work on

2. Second, work on:

J. Problem Behaviors

1. First, work on: Harmful Behaviors. While in school Johnny will not hit, bite, scratch, kick, throw objects or be involved in any other harmful act for 30 consecutive days.

2. Second, work on:

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